

# **WELL MAINTENANCE**

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The safety and purity of your drinking water and the efficient operation of your private well system depends on a well-organized maintenance plan. Protect your investment with regular inspection and testing; and when necessary, repair or treatment.

## **Create a Well Maintenance Log**

Gather a comprehensive history on your well and water quality. If you don't already have a well log (also known as a water well record, well completion report, or drilling report), ask your well contractor or state environmental agency for a copy. Most states require well contractors to file a well log when a new well is drilled, and many states have searchable databases to retrieve this information electronically. Local health departments may also keep a copy of these records.

The well log should include a reference number for the well, date the well was drilled, the well owner at the time of construction, location of the well, and various construction details such as drilling method used, depth of the well, depth and type of casing (lining of your well/visible pipe aboveground), and depth and size of the pump. Some well logs may also have results of the first water test when the well was drilled. This information will provide the basis on which to schedule regular maintenance such as water testing and inspections.

## **Set a Well Maintenance Schedule**

Plan maintenance of the wellhead, well system, water quality, water treatment devices, and septic system using our recommendations below.

### **Well Inspection**

- Inspect your wellhead several times a year. Check the condition of the well covering, casing, and well cap to make sure all are in good condition, leaving no cracks or other entry points for potential pollutants.
- Have the well system, including the pump, storage tank, pipes, valves, and water flow inspected every 5 years by a licensed well contractor.
- If you have no inspection record and cannot determine the age of the well, have it inspected immediately by a licensed well contractor.
- When your well reaches the end of its serviceable life, usually more than 20 years, contact your licensed well contractor to install a new system and properly close the old well.

## Well Testing

- Test drinking water immediately if you have no recent test results or any record of previous tests.
- At a minimum, your water should be tested every year for bacteria, anything of local concern, or any contaminants that you are monitoring from previous test results.
- Test if you notice any change in the taste, color, or odor of your water.
- Test more than once a year in special situations: someone in the household is pregnant or nursing; there are unexplained illnesses in the family; your neighbors find a dangerous contaminant in their water; or there is a spill of chemicals or fuels into or near your well.
- Test after any flooding in or near the well system.
- Test after disinfecting your well to make sure the process was effective. *Note: this treatment process is **not** recommended as regular maintenance. Please see our information sheet on [Disinfecting Your Well](#) for additional information.*

Contact your state or local health department for a list of state-certified laboratories in your area or use our [interactive map on our website](#).

## Water Treatment System

It is important to note that not all well water needs treatment. If you have treatment, please read through the following recommendations:

- Test drinking water before installing any water treatment device.
- Test water every year to make sure the device is working properly.
- Follow the inspection and maintenance schedule provided by your water treatment device manufacturer or water treatment professional.

If your test results indicate treatment may be necessary, contact a certified water treatment professional in your area for guidance. To search for a certified water treatment professional in your area use Water Quality Association's [website](#).

## Septic System

A poorly maintained wastewater treatment system poses a serious threat to the quality of your drinking water and can require expensive repairs. The cost of pumping a septic tank is far less than the expense of replacing a drainfield clogged by solids. We recommend the following preventive measures:

- Inspect the septic tank each year for capacity and leaks.
- Pump out the tank as needed, usually every three to five years, based on the number of people in the household and the size of the tank.
- Repair the tank or drainfield system as needed to prevent leaks into groundwater.

Contact your septic service professional for additional recommendations and service. To locate septic service professionals in your area, try these websites [NOWRA](#) and [NAWT](#).

## **For More Information on Well Maintenance**

Contact your licensed well contractor, water treatment professional, septic service professional, or the [wellcare®](#) Hotline at 888-395-1033 for additional measures you can take in and around your home to protect your well, well water, and septic system.



## **Information to help maintain and protect your water well system:**

[wellcare®](#) is a program of the [Water Systems Council \(WSC\)](#). WSC is the only national organization solely focused on protecting the health and water supply of an estimated 23 million households nationwide who depend on private wells (according to the U.S. EPA).

This publication is one of more than 100 [wellcare®](#) information sheets available FREE at [www.watersystemscouncil.org](http://www.watersystemscouncil.org).

Well owners and others with questions about wells and well water can contact the [wellcare®](#) Hotline at 1-888-395-1033 or visit [www.wellcarehotline.org](http://www.wellcarehotline.org) to fill out a contact form or chat with us live!

## **JOIN THE WELLCARE® WELL OWNERS NETWORK!**

By joining the FREE [wellcare®](#) Well Owners Network, you will receive regular information on how to maintain your well and protect your well water.

Contact us at 1-888-395-1033 or visit [www.wellcarehotline.org](http://www.wellcarehotline.org) to join!